CHILD STUDY

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL of PARENT EDUCATION

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HEADLINES

What is character made of? Can good traits be "trained" into children, or how *does* character really develop?

★

The various aspects of character development at different ages are discussed in this issue by: Dorothy V. Whipple, M.D., formerly of the Children's Bureau and now a practicing pediatrician in Washington, D. C., and author of a book to be published this summer called "The American Baby, a Handbook on the Art of Baby Care"; Peter Blos, Executive Secretary, Institute on Personality Development of the Progressive Education Association, also Guidance Counsellor at Brooklyn College; Anna W. M. Wolf, senior staff member of the Family Guidance and Consultation Service of the Child Study Association, and author of "The Parents' Manual" and "Our Children Face War," both books awarded the Parents' Magazine Medal for Outstanding Books for Parents. The Science Contributes article was written by Dr. Lawrence S. Kubie, psychiatrist, who is Associate in Neurology at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University. The material for the study "Looking at the Comics" was prepared by Josette Frank, Educational Associate and Mrs. Hugh Grant Straus, Chairman, Children's Book Committee, Child Study Association.

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Though fathers may not be as ever-present as mothers, they are equally important in the life of the family—whether they are at home or in the armed services. The fall issue of CHILD STUDY will be devoted to "The Father of the Family."

EDITORIAL

WITHIN recent months, changing conditions in America at war have been bringing more regulations to civilians, while our younger men and young women, too, in ever-increasing numbers have been taking on the strict routines of life in the armed services. Inevitably this has raised many questions in the minds of thoughtful people. From parents of nursery age children, from teachers, from those who see restless, disturbed adolescents at school and at work, the feeling is the same: the war has shortened the period of childhood, our boys and girls are grown-up over night, and they have to meet a new, hard world. Are we preparing them for this regimented living? Has the freedom and concern for the individual that characterized recent educational methods been adequate? Or would we do better to tighten up on our procedures, to start preparing our children from the beginning with stricter routines, with more rules and regulations? It is an old confusion in a new setting.

The pendulum in many places seems to be swinging toward more control, more "training," more planning for group conformity, even in democratic nations whose avowed philosophy runs counter to these very ideas. There are interesting indications, however, from high places that this may *not* be the answer. As far back as March 8, 1942, the *New York Times* quoted an Army statement that "discipline must be built upon the intelligence, sportsmanship, individuality and group cooperativeness of the men in the ranks," and that "iron discipline" and the old type of military training was not necessary. The Army and Navy practice of assigning men to the special service for which they are best fitted by ability also bears out the theory that mere training is not enough, without aptitude and interest. A doctor, home on furlough from one of the southern camps, reports that the boys who seem to be making the best adjustment to the demands of Army routine are often those from so-called sheltered homes, where they have had the chance to develop self-confidence and a certain kind of individual integrity in an atmosphere of love and understanding.

These ideas, also, are not new, but now they are found in new places. They suggest and confirm the findings in the field of child development and education which have been built up on the basis of sound research during the past few decades.

The articles in this issue explore these ideas further. Training alone, in the sense of hard and fast routines and repetition, has not worked. Our knowledge leads us to an altogether different approach. We have learned that it is sound and healthy for a child to develop at his own speed and in his own rhythm, so that he feels comfortable and secure. He can be helped and encouraged to give up one stage for the next on the slow path to maturity, but he should not be pushed faster than he can go. With patience and affection and understanding of his own special qualities we can do more to help a child toward the character and resourcefulness and self-reliance that he will need, than with all the "habit training" by rule that can be devised. Though this may seem to be the easy, soft way, it is in fact the slow, hard way, as parents and teachers well know. But it is the best way for sound, lasting results.

THE EDITORS.

The Roots of Character

By ANNA W. M. WOLF

THE idea that good habits, *i.e.*, good character (or are they really the same thing?) are the result of careful training, begun early and carried out consistently on the part of parents and teachers, dies hard. Fortunately, however, there are more and more parents and teachers today who see that their job does not consist only of instructing their children or even of "setting a good example." It goes further, too, than rewarding good patterns of behavior and punishing bad ones. Inevitably, of course, parents, especially during the child's nursery years, are bound to do some of just these things. Children most assuredly need a chance to discover the difference between right and wrong—what things are socially acceptable and what are socially taboo, what will earn them friendship and a comfortable place among their fellows and what will, on the other hand, lose them the love and approval they crave. But such experiences are the merest beginning of character development, and unless families and others see beyond them, and more deeply, they are likely to be disappointed when the child's "training" does not bear the fruits they expected.

There are, I believe, two words, or preferably the living ideas behind the words, that those who deal with young children should keep in mind. One is *readiness*, the other is *relationship*. The clarity with which adults understand these concepts will have more to do with success and failure in educating children than the most rigid consistency and the most careful training could possibly accomplish.

Take *readiness* first: We are largely indebted to Dr. Arnold Gesell for his careful and ingenious demonstrations that the maturing process is all-important in what the child is able to learn. Despite every effort, you cannot teach a month-old child to walk; on the other hand, a fifteen month old child can hardly be kept from walking. Your teaching has little to do with it—the maturing process everything. You can't teach a six-year-old long-division (unless he is an embryo Einstein); at ten or eleven the average child learns with comparative ease. There is always, of course, a borderline at which enormous efforts on the part of grown-ups, though they are of questionable worth, may bring results. You *can* teach a five-year-old to read—but at what pain and anguish! At seven, just because they have had two more years of growth, most children will learn in a brief span and with little effort. At the age of ten, for example, given children of about equal native intelligence, the fact that one child may have learned to read much earlier than the other gives him not the slightest advantage over the one who learned later—in fact, socially and physically he may even be at a disadvantage.

These facts are now for the most part accepted in regard to the teaching of academic subjects, yet they have had much less currency in regard to the teaching of habits and routines in children's daily life—the things that are supposed to be the stuff of character. Here unfortunately the principle of *readiness* is forgotten and the old, you-can't-learn-a-good-thing-too-young dogma holds sway in many homes—and also, alas, in many educational circles. According to this view, parents should begin to teach bladder and bowel control at a few months of age, to instil habits of independence by letting babies "cry it out" unless they are physically endangered by safety-pins or colic. A little later, children should form the habit of "finishing their meals" of "eating everything put before them" of being Spartan about bumps, of playing alone and of a host of other more or less adult and civilized behavior patterns, long before they are out of what used to be the cradle—until we were taught (questionably) that rocking forms bad habits.

On the negative side, various undesirable modes of behavior—like thumb-sucking, putting toys in the mouth, masturbation; and a little later hitting, biting, selfishness, untruthfulness; and later reading the comics or being rude to grandmother—all these are too often dealt with in the same way. Nip them in the bud as soon as they rear their ugly heads. Nearly everything that grown-ups don't like are lumped together as bad habits and regarded as the result of faulty training and insufficient strictness in putting the foot down at the very start. Scant consideration is given to whether in some cases the be-

havior is altogether characteristic of infancy and should be let alone, or whether it represents a complex pattern of character springing from a multiplicity of deep-lying causes. In either case, "training" and "cracking down" are definitely not the answer.

To go back to the *readiness* principle. The more we know about children, the clearer it becomes that they are not ready to learn to be dry during night and nap-time until after fifteen months. And, of course, these times for learning will always vary somewhat with the individual child.

Many children are normally wet at night and occasionally in the daytime until three or four years old. Even better than the calendar as an index to when to begin training are the child's own signs of readiness such as the grunting, pointing, flushing, wiggling or monosyllable that the alert mother learns to recognize. Screaming and resistance to toilet training are always the sign to leave off and try again at a later date. Suppositories to force regularity lay the foundation for later trouble and stubbornness. The early trained, "cleanly" infant is by no means a feather in the mother's cap. On the contrary there is increasing psychiatric evidence showing the ill effects of these things in fussy, stubborn or hostile personalities in later life.

Just as a lively unashamed interest in products of his body is suitable for the young child but a pathological sign in older children or adults, so, too, the impulse to suck (thumb or objects), to masturbate, to experiment with "dirty" language, to tell "tall stories," to be selfish, to express hatred unabashedly are all normal phases of the young child's life but have different significance when they occur later in life. We know that if parents can understand this thoroughly and refrain from injecting their own anxiety into the situation as an enormously complicating factor, children do actually, as a general rule, outgrow these things. Time is on our side. In daily contact with adult standards and civilized living, children do eventually give up infantile pleasures and begin to control primitive instincts, as the price of being included in the ranks of acceptable members of society. If they are hurried and pushed and punished by strict, anxious grown-ups, even though they may submit, their genuinely wholesome development is seriously jeopardized. Not only are they more likely to relapse to infantilisms when the parents have decided that such and such problem is well behind them, but, in addition, various forms of neurotic character formations result, all the more insidious because the connection to early "overtraining" and severe repressive measures is by no means obvious.

It is highly important, of course, that parents should not draw the conclusion that because overtraining and too early training are bad things that there should be no training at all. No child brought up in our civilized society wants to be allowed to go on wetting himself, or screaming or having tempers, indulging his sexual wishes or committing aggressions. He wants parents who are what he thinks of as "good" parents—that is, parents who have standards and who on the whole live up to them. He wants parents who can control themselves, and when necessary control him. Grown-ups must, in other words, be on the side of the child's conscience and see that he does not transgress so far that he feels chaos within and the inevitable sense of guilt and inferiority that go with it.

One of the most puzzling of all educational problems is just what to do when a child seems, according to his age and general development, ripe for the next step forward, essentially ready to give up infantile ways, yet doesn't want to and won't. It must always be remembered, of course, that age itself is no certain indication of readiness. For example, most three-year-olds feed themselves nicely, but there are always those who need help longer and achieve better food habits if given this help. Most children accept a dark room and closed doors at night; others need the door open or a comforting light burning till nine or ten or later. Sometimes a childish habit can be broken suddenly, almost forcibly so it may seem, by a firm adult. Success by this method comes only if the child has been inwardly ready for the change for some time, and merely needed, as it were, to have his particular "crutch" taken away from him in order to walk alone. The method is dangerous in the hands of any adult who is himself stubborn and therefore unable to abandon the method when it clearly does not work and will feel defeated if the situation calls for going back again to a policy of watchful waiting. Discovering the moment of readiness and getting one's teaching in at that point turns out, after all is said, to be no simple rule-of-thumb procedure or matter of laboratory tests. It takes parents with a fine sense for the inner growth processes of their child and great sensitiveness about when and how to act.

This brings us to the second great watchword—*relationship*. The relationships in a child's life must be understood as meaning all of the feelings and emotions, past as well as present, unconscious as well as

conscious, that go on between a child and the members of his family, and later, the other members of his community. The author of the truly revolutionary discovery that feelings and impulses are often unconscious, that in fact we are to a large extent motivated by these unconscious impulses, is, of course, Freud. In the process of studying the sources of adult neuroses Freud has shed immense light on the psychology of early childhood and the nature of children's early emotional ties.

Since children's ties with their parents are both the earliest and deepest, this relationship proves to be the determining element in all others. What we are, whether we are self-confident or self-doubting, generous or mean, loving or hateful, suspicious and withdrawn or realistic and outgoing—all the things that matter most, rest on this early relationship with parents and siblings. Just how these early experiences determine character cannot be stated simply. Here, in fact, lies the whole science of psychoanalysis. Parents should realize, however, that *relationship* implies much more than merely imitating the good or bad example of parents, much more than the good and bad precepts by which children may be guided, more even than the justice or injustice by which they are treated. It has more to do with whether children are loved or not, which is no simple thing; for human love, even the best of it, is perversely compounded with its opposite, and children disappoint and torment their parents in a hundred different ways.

The relationship between children and those who guide them profoundly affects learning of all kinds. Those who try to build character purely through instilling virtues like responsibility, generosity, good concentration and truthfulness by a mere drill process, will be doomed to disappointment.

How, for example, do you develop truthfulness in children? The first principle in truthfulness is that adults should treat children truthfully. It is important that children respect the person whom they also are fond of. It is hard to learn morality from people you hate. If such a person is full of virtue it is apt to set a child against virtue. It is the relationship you have with the child himself through which the child learns. We learn with our feelings, and the way children learn to value courtesy, honesty, kindness, is to see the people they care for practicing these things.

The answer to how you may re-educate a child who tells lies and pilfers, for example, consists not in finding either a suitable punishment on the one hand or, on the other, methods of kindly reasonableness to bring him to his senses. It lies in how to effect a reconstruction of his entire inner life, and in the process, very likely in the inner life of his parents, too. So with other faults. Children who are chronically destructive have not merely formed a bad habit. They are impelled by inner animosities of which they themselves can give no account to commit aggressions against their world. The child who is failing in school is in all probability doing so not because nobody taught him "good study habits from the very beginning," but because he feels that his teachers are his enemies, or his school subjects have never really met his own needs, or because he is so disturbed emotionally at home or with his friends, that his urge to escape into day-dreaming is overpowering. We see often how children acquire good study habits when they are inwardly free to do so—when a great teacher who fires their interest enters their lives, or when they come bump up against the necessities involved in getting along in some project that meets their genuine needs. Young people who have been slipshod all through school and college may, if the moment is ripe and their own desires marshalled, quite suddenly give themselves wholeheartedly to some real work with its dull moments as well as its bright ones.

Before this war, one heard much grumbling from grown-ups about the irresponsibility of youth. We had failed, it was said, to instil habits of responsibility into young people at an early age. That was why they kept such late hours or ran around in the family automobile or refused to do their share of the routine chores of family life. We should go back, it was implied, to the older puritan ways of forced labor at hated tasks. That was how character was built. But was it? Were we not rather failing to find ways of sending our youth out to tasks worthy of their caliber? We kept them sheltered and provided for, "educated" in ivory towers, smothered, at least among the privileged classes, with "advantages." But suddenly it is the oldsters who must be humble. It is now plain to see what, given the opportunity, they can do—those "irresponsible" ne'er-do-wells, now eighteen or a few years older. Today it isn't the family automobile but bombers over the whole world that keeps them out nights. While we sit securely at home these young people, both boys and girls, are winning the war for us with disciplined courage.

And after the war, what? The army knows it isn't the drill sergeant who builds character, but jobs full of meaning, jobs worthy of one's mettle, and shared with others one can both love and respect. Can we carry this lesson into the more difficult task of peace?

Beyond the Tyranny of the Clock

By DOROTHY V. WHIPPLE, M.D.

FOR just about a generation now, babies have been brought up by clockwork. The goal has been to establish regularity in the lives of children; and it has been thought that, by accustoming a baby to a regular routine early in life, a lifelong pattern of regularity could be established. To this end, during the first few days of life a baby was offered food, either from the breast or from a bottle, at prescribed times. After the baby had eaten, he was put back in his crib and not given food again until the next feeding hour. If he wakened before feeding-time, he might be given a drink of water, but no food until the clock reached the appointed time. He could yell, if he liked, but his yelling brought him nothing, and, as time passed, the great majority of babies ceased to yell and accepted the routine laid down for them. Not only were babies fed according to schedule but also they were bathed, aired, even played with according to the clock. The entire life of a baby ran on schedule.

Mothers were cautioned not to pick up the baby when he cried unless it was time for some phase of his routine care. Picking a baby up whenever he cried, warned the experts, will spoil him, will make him think that all he needs to do to get attention is to cry. He must be made to realize that crying accomplishes nothing and that all in good time he will receive everything he needs.

Some mothers found it hard to abide by these rules. They hated to hear their babies cry, but they were told that crying was good exercise and that it did babies no harm. Finally they were urged not to be sentimental, but to realize the importance of starting the baby in the right path for the years to come.

At about the same time that regularity came to the forefront in baby care, several psychological laboratories in which infant behavior was studied in great detail were established in different parts of the country. Dr. Gesell's Clinic of Child Development at Yale is one of the most famous of these.

Partly from these laboratories, partly from doctors and others who watched many babies grow up, has come a wealth of new information about the growth and development of babies. Much of this recent knowledge is taking definite form in what might be called the devolopmental approach to the problems of child care. For an understanding of the attitude toward babies and young children expressed through this philosophy it is essential to consider the human baby in the larger setting of the entire planet and the life upon it.

Babies are human beings, says Aldrich, but they are even more than human beings—they are part of the spark of life that inhabits this planet. Babies share with every other living thing a drive which makes them grow and develop in a certain way.

Every robin's egg grows into a robin; every corn kernel into a stalk of corn; every acorn into an oak; and every tiny human embryo deep within its mother's womb grows into a human being—not one has ever fooled us and grown into something else! No one teaches the young how to grow nor trains them in development. They know, by some God-given knowledge, inherent in the germ plasm, how to follow the pattern of their ancestors. We humans, in common with all other forms of life on this planet, share this knowledge. Babies grow into men and women, and we cannot stop them.

While we cannot teach the young of any species how to grow or how to develop, we can, and do, however, provide them with an environment—a place where they can find all they need in order to grow to their full stature, or a place which thwarts and inhibits and permits only part of the total development inherent in the embryo. To grow the corn kernel, the farmer sees to it that the soil is fertile, that there is plenty of water, that nothing obstructs the sunshine, that parasites do not get a chance to molest the young, growing plant. More than this he cannot do. He then lets nature take its course and watches the corn kernel grow and produce the best ear of corn that is possible, considering the inherent quality of the seed from which it started.

So, with a baby, we try to provide an environment in which growth and development are unhindered; and, if a baby were no more than a stalk of corn, his needs would be met when he had adequate food, clothing, shelter, and protection from disease. We could feel our job was done after we had given him calories to cover his needs, adequate vitamins and minerals, all in a readily digestible mixture; when we kept him warm and inoculated him against disease.

But such is not the case. The more complicated the organism that carries the spark of life, the greater are the needs which enable it to reach its full stature.

A human being, for example, has emotions, feelings which are as much a part of his total self as the blood which circulates through his blood vessels. A good environment has to take emotions as well as bodies into account.

What are the feelings of a new-born baby? As we watch him, it is possible to speculate a little concerning that which has made him what he is. For nine months he has been developing in his mother's womb, and as soon as his organs have matured to the point where he can live without the constant protection of his mother's body, he is born. Development is a continuous process—it starts before birth, it continues after birth. Birth is but an event in the life of a baby; and while it is but an event, it is, nevertheless, a tremendously important one. Never again, all through life, will anyone be asked to undergo so much change, or so rapid a change in his way of life, as a baby does when he leaves his mother's womb. In the course of a few hours the baby must take on the full responsibility for his own life—he must do his own breathing; he must digest his own food; he must eliminate his own wastes. Not only this, but he must become accustomed to many new experiences. He has never seen light before, nor heard noises, nor known what it feels like to be too hot or too cold. He has never been hungry.

Many of these new experiences that come to the baby soon after birth are not pleasant. It is probable, therefore, that when a baby is uncomfortable, especially when the sensation is new, he becomes frightened. Fear is probably an early emotional experience of most babies. Long-continued periods of fear, so the psychologists say, leave their mark on the impressionable nervous structure of the new-born. It is up to us who stand and watch to heed the baby's call and try to make his adjustment to the world outside his mother's womb as easy as possible. We do not want him to be frightened; certainly not for long periods.

With much of the baby's adjustment we cannot help, or only very slightly. The baby *must* do his own breathing and digesting and sleeping. We can, however, see that he has good air to breathe, food that digests easily, and a comfortable place to sleep. We can try to see that some of the new experiences do not come to him too suddenly. Adjustment is easier if it can be made slowly.

But even with all our care the baby will become uncomfortable and frightened. When he is frightened, we want, if we can, to soothe him and comfort him. We want him to know that, although the world contains unpleasant things, it also contains pleasant ones as well. A mother's instinct tells her what will soothe her baby. She picks him up, rocks him, "talks" to him. The feel of firm arms holding him securely, the feel of his mother's body usually brings peace to a baby. Why these things should be so soothing, it's hard to say, but perhaps it is because these sensations, or something very like them, were the very first feelings the baby ever had, back when he was in his mother's body; and a baby, even like a grown-up, likes to go back to what he knew before and liked. But, whatever the reason, we want our baby to like this world and want to stay here. We don't want him to find it so unpleasant that he is anxious to run away and go back to the only other place he knows—his mother's womb.

BEING born is one of the first of many changes that will happen to a baby as he develops. If we can arrange things so that the baby *likes* to push ahead to more mature ways, we have done a great deal for that baby to make it possible for him to reach his maximum development. If, on the other hand, we let him stay cold or hungry or otherwise uncomfortable, if we let him become frightened by loud noises, if he is never rocked or fondled, he may get a lasting dislike for taking on anything new, and, since maturing and developing mean ever new experiences, such a reaction in early infancy can have a profound effect upon the ultimate personality of the individual.

And so, with these ideas in mind, we take a fresh look at our way of dealing with young babies. Each baby is an individual with needs and feelings a little different from those of other babies. If we would do the best by him, if we would provide him with the optimum environment, we will study his needs and try to meet them.

The human baby is endowed with one asset, shared by no other species, that can be of great help to us, if we would do well by him. This asset is the baby's ability to cry.

A baby can cry, but can do little else to take care of his needs. The young of most other species can pull themselves around, can hunt around for that meal their tummies tell them they need, but the baby just lies in one place and yells for someone to come and make him comfortable. A baby's ability to cry is nature's way of seeing that his needs are taken care of. It is up to us adults to keep in step with

nature and to heed this cry. A baby doesn't cry for nothing—he cries because he is uncomfortable. It is up to us to find out why, and to fix it.

In the early weeks of life, a baby sleeps most of the time. He rouses only when some inner sensation becomes so acute that it wakens him and he bursts into cries. Usually the most urgent need is for food, and good warm milk will quiet the cries. If the milk comes from his mother's breast, the baby will get some holding and rocking along with his milk; he will probably be fondled a little, sung to, perhaps, and generally get a feeling of being loved and mothered. These little extras that are an almost inevitable part of breast-feeding help the baby get over the unpleasant sensations that hunger produced in him. These things are as much a part of a good environment for a young baby as is the milk itself. With breast-feeding they are almost automatic, but they can be made a part of bottle-feeding, too, if the baby is always picked up to be fed instead of having a bottle propped up and poked into his mouth.

Most of the crying of a young baby springs from some obvious cause. He may be hungry or cold or wet or irritated by a pin, and then what to do is clear. But sometimes a baby cries, and, for the life of us, we cannot see that anything is the matter. He seems warm; he is dry; he has just finished a meal; he doesn't seem to have a pain; he is not sick—there just doesn't seem to be any reason at all for the screaming, and yet the natural instinct of his mother tells her what to do. She holds him, rocks him a little, maybe she sings to him and whispers to him all those sweet nothings that mothers and babies understand. And that's what he wanted. He is quiet and peaceful immediately. His crying brought him what he was crying for—his mother's loving attention.

Let that be a lesson to us. Crying is the mechanism of self-protection with which nature has endowed the human infant. A baby will never be "spoiled" by attending to his needs. He needs food and warmth, but he needs also love and all the little baby things that go with his mother's demonstration of her love. A baby who gets plenty of this kind of attention will not cry for more—it is the baby who never has enough, who is always crying for more—*he* is the "spoiled" baby, the baby whose chances of being an emotionally stable person are "spoiled."

A baby whose needs are met as they arise during the early weeks of life, rather soon settles down into a rhythm of eating and sleeping that is quite regular. A baby does not need to be taught to be regular. If we give him a chance to pick his own pattern, he will find some scheme of things that suits him and then he will stick to it with considerable precision. During the first few weeks he wakes for food at intervals during the twenty-four hours, but it is surprising how soon in life a baby accepts the pattern of his species and sleeps the night through. It is wholly unnecessary to make a baby yell for an hour or two in the middle of the night in order to break him of his night feeding. Give him that feeding as long as he wants it. As soon as he has grown up enough not to need it, he will not ask for it.

AND SO with many other changes that are made in the baby's life. When a baby has matured enough to do a certain thing, he will do it, and it is next to impossible to make him do it sooner. This is true not only of feeding time but of many other things as well. For example, in past years there has been a great vogue for "training" children to use a "potty" at two or three months of age. Sometimes a baby is regular enough in timing his stools so that the mother, expecting a stool, knows by the look on the baby's face when to place him on the "potty." This, of course, is not real training, because the baby makes no conscious effort to take some of the responsibility for the act. Real training for use of the toilet cannot come much before eight or ten months, because it is not until then that the necessary nerves and muscles have matured enough to obtain a connection with the brain that brings them under control. Bowel training started at about this time is usually successful; but started much earlier it is apt to cause the mother much frustration, because there will be many accidents and few successes.

Most changes that the baby makes in his régime are the result of his growing up and taking the next step. The wise mother is ever ready to help her baby take each new step when he has indicated his readiness for it, but she never forces him into something he is not old enough to accept.

Just as it is no longer considered desirable to force every baby into a daily time schedule that has been found to work for some babies, so it is not desirable to try to force him into a yearly schedule designed for someone else. One baby will be ready to stop sucking and take his milk from a cup at seven months; another baby may wish to hang onto his bottle well into the second year. Each is an expression of an individual need, and should be respected.

The essence of the newer approach is to take your cue from the baby. He is an individual, entitled to

(*Continued on page 122*)

Character Development in Early Adolescence

By PETER BLOS

IN THE in-between age, when a child is neither "pre-school" nor really adolescent, we begin to relax our constant care and watching, and to wonder if we should not tighten up our discipline. Does the growing boy or girl now need new "habit training" to strengthen character? We cannot suddenly relax and leave everything to the child, nor can we continue to supervise his activities as closely as we had done up to now. It is at this point that we parents must make up our minds as to what are really the important factors which influence our children's personality and character development. We know now that this development will grow out of the condensation of experiences which the child has during these years. It is worth while therefore to consider how the controlling forces in the child operate and through what stages they pass.

A young child's sense of responsibility grows out of a happy relationship to his parents or parent substitutes. He will learn to pick up things, remember to put on rubbers, and all the other little things, if he can identify with his mother and accept her way of doing things without conflict. We often see how a long-established "habit" in a young child goes to pieces if the relationship to his parent (or to his nurse or teacher) is disturbed. If, for example, he is jealous of a new brother, or feels that he is not getting enough attention, we should not be surprised if he refuses to comply with the most reasonable demands in order to get the center of the stage.

As the child grows older, during school age and early adolescence, a shift takes place as his world, and his social relationships expand. At this age the child needs to learn to do things because of the satisfaction of doing them, without worrying about such virtues as responsibility or regularity as expressions of his fluctuating feelings toward the people around him. This means that the child has to become more realistic or, in other words, that the faculty within him which has the power of reason, logic, and control, namely the *ego*, has to be developed and strengthened. Growth of this *ego* faculty is a slow process. To have it develop properly, children must be allowed to make mistakes without undue excitement or reference to moral values on our part; they must be allowed to experience the realities of cause and effect directly and realistically.

The development of responsibility in children is definitely dependent upon the ability to keep moral issues out of the realm of their daily routines, out of all the practical and physical necessities which become immensely more complex as they grow older. Only if parents don't make a virtue out of brushing teeth, for instance, can it become a routine which may naturally be forgotten at times, but certainly less often than if it is magnified into a crucial moral issue which calls forth rebellion. The trouble usually is that when children fall down in their routines we are afraid that if we don't tighten the discipline immediately a disintegration will take place.

It is at this point that we need to realize that child training is essentially different from dog training. Our goals for children are different. They must eventually learn to make decisions for themselves. Obviously this is a slow process. Any progress in the acquisition of good habits will break down whenever new aspects of social or physical development take the center of the stage. It is not a simple process of addition: so many good habits to make a well-organized human being, but instead all these habits in themselves have to be correlated and integrated. This is intrinsically a process of growth and development, and not just formalized habit training.

Children, as we have seen, need to be helped to get acquainted with the necessities of life on a level appropriate to their age, and they have to be held responsible to the extent to which they can grasp these experiences. For example, an elementary school child with homework to do over the week-end might profit by having his mother discuss with him when he will be able to do it, and agree to help him by reminding him at the prearranged time. If after this the child does not live up to his agreement, then he must expect, let's say, not to listen to a certain radio program because that time will have to be devoted to his school work. Or perhaps a better example: If an eight-year-old child has a certain favorite radio program to which he is allowed to listen before bedtime provided he has first taken his bath (the time for supper, bath, and radio program having been agreed upon), and then he dawdles after supper so that it is too late for both bath and radio program, he should be made to realize that it would have been better to have stuck to the agreement. We need not

be moralistic about this. The cause and effect relationship, the importance of an agreement, and the settlement of problems by discussion beforehand are clear and realistic experiences from which the child learns. They are essential for the development of a strong ego. This is the place for holding children to their tasks.

It is natural for the young adolescent to rebel against accustomed routines or family practices. He will do this all the more violently if the development of self-discipline throughout his early years has been tied up closely with his parents' approval or disapproval. By rebelling now against family routines he is actually trying to develop an independent self; and this is an important step in his emotional growth. On the other hand, complete license to do as he pleases is not the answer because this gives the young adolescent the feeling of being left out in the cold. A youngster has to be taken into an adult's confidence as to what his wishes are—how he sees the picture. Experiences have to be provided so that he can find unsupervised outlets which will not be harmful to him for this need of independence. We need to provide experiences such as trips alone to friends or relatives, gang adventures, decisions about his own property—whether to sell his electric train or his stamps—and the child needs to be able to do these things without too much parental questioning or advice. Innumerable situations of this sort will come up in every family with a pre-adolescent youngster, particularly a boy, if one watches for them.

This is the period when routines are vigorously questioned. But very often a youngster will not object to them at all if he is allowed to make his own kind of arrangements. For example, instead of fighting about taking a bath at night, as he has been doing for twelve years, he may be glad to take a shower in the morning, and there are many situations in which cleanliness is not of such great urgency. Let him be clean for Sunday school or for grandmother's dinner, but don't ask him to clean up thoroughly when he comes in after a ball game and is going out right after supper to see a friend. This may make a bad impression on your neighbor, but you must make a choice. Which is more important, living in peace with your son or risking a neighbor's raised eyebrows?

Interesting out-of-family experiences in the community, school or clubs are helpful during this transitional period. A youngster finds it easy to relate his developing sense of responsibility to the values and standards of his new group loyalties. But as we give young adolescents progressively more freedom in situations where parents have no immediate control, we have to be frank and outspoken with them about the possible complications and unexpected experiences they may meet. For instance, if we let a twelve or thirteen year old boy come home alone from a dance in the city, we should also consider him old enough to acquaint him with the unpleasant aspects of urban night life which he might run up against.

The need for personal adventure is certainly a most important aspect during these years. If children get too accustomed to experiences only in fantasy through radio or movies they will lack the first-hand contact with adventure which is the forerunner of the initiative and imagination so important in later years for actively participating citizens. In the pre-adolescent age youngsters welcome any out-of-the-ordinary occasion. The other day, when Spring first came, I watched a group of twelve and thirteen year old boys, who were dying for excitement, spend the night simply sleeping in the yard. Of course they were uncomfortable, they didn't sleep too well, they got dirty and messed up, but it made them more agreeable about accepting later infringements upon their personal freedom which had to be imposed for their own protection.

We as adults are so set in our routines that we very often overlook the pleasure which comes from interrupting them. Every parent can make these observations with youngsters of this age—how they invent the oddest ways of doing things "just for once." And it doesn't mean a breakdown of morale or discipline or the wrecking of good habits if we let them do so.

A MUCH favored means of developing good habits and responsibility is through the assignment of routine tasks such as having a child take his own dishes to the kitchen, sweeping the front walk, taking the dog out, or watering the lawn. It is my feeling that these tasks are usually prematurely imposed on children. They should be preceded by occasional work assignments which are appropriate to the child's span of attention. I don't think there is anything more ruinous to family life than the daily complaints about the child falling down on the job. Of course, the age at which children are able to take on responsibility for routine jobs varies with different children. And we should always remember that it is so much easier to do things together than to expect children to do jobs alone.

Coming back to the subject of comics and radio, I think that these things do satisfy the fantastic and

highly imaginative side of a child's need for adventure. But the only way to have them strike a wholesome medium is to make a child's life an exciting business it itself. And nothing seems to be more exciting to children than a break in the accustomed way of doing things. I think that this offers a wide open field for parents to explore.

What about a child's friendships and their influence on his character? The choice of friends leads to many problems for a parent. Of course children need friends and they should be free to make their own choices. However, it often happens that children select friends whose influence is not constructive, who intensify difficulties rather than help them to be solved. For example, a nine year old girl with little self-confidence, not too successful in her school work, may choose a friend who is scholastically very superior, but who is "bossy" and therefore not very popular. Somehow these two children are drawn together. The shy child enjoys her friend's superiority and her ability to boss others. But this is a case where parents and teachers often feel friendships should be broken up. Even while we respect the integrity of a child's personal choices, we have to admit that there are often real problems in children's friendships which, of course, can only be answered in each individual situation on the basis of an intimate knowledge of both children involved. One has to see whether a friendship is an enriching experience which leads to an expansion of the child's personality or leads to a further entrenchment into idiosyncrasies. In most cases it is better to keep hands off and let the children work it out themselves.

But adult interference is at times unavoidable. While this is comparatively easy with elementary school children, it is very difficult to manage with young adolescents and should preferably be handled by a teacher or group leader, rather than a parent, since adolescence is a time when the youngsters are ready to rebel against parental authority on any score.

One of the things which strongly distresses parents is the acquisition of "bad language habits." We can always blame this on the child's friends. Obviously they have picked up these words somewhere. However, the influence at home is, in the long run, much stronger than the temporary influence of other children who use bad language. Bad language is something children have to outgrow, and they can only do so by having had a time when they are permitted to use it. Here again, if a moral issue is made of it, bad language becomes more persistent. One thing

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Parents' Questions and Discussion

The questions published here are selected and discussed by the staff of the Child Study Association, and the answers written by various members. The department is edited by Helen G. Sternau.

Do you think it would harm my six-month-old daughter if I took her out with us occasionally when we go visiting? We can rarely leave the house unless we do this because it's so hard to get anyone to stay with her these days.

Many young mothers are faced with this situation today and are finding it necessary to deviate occasionally from the regular routines that used to be considered so sacred. Some babies are more easily disturbed by a change of scene than others, but even for these a break from the usual course of events is a good thing now and then. Actually, the babies themselves are often less bothered by change than are their mothers, who may be anxious and insecure themselves about new situations for their children. It may be the mother's own tension that upsets her baby rather than the change of routine itself.

If you plan it out in advance, and are resourceful enough to see that your baby's chief needs for food and rest are properly safeguarded, then you should be able to have the peace of mind that will let you both enjoy the experience. It is surely better for you to take your daughter with you occasionally, tucking her away in a quiet room at a friend's house for her rest period, than for you to feel unhappy and cooped up yourself because you cannot get the needed amusement and change. In the long run, an unhappy, restless mother is a great deal worse for a baby than a few minor upsets in routines.

When your child gets to be two or three and is more active and aware of what is going on, it will not be as easy to take her with you as it is now. By that time you may be able to arrange with some friend who has a child about the same age as yours with whom you can take turns—one couple taking

care of both children together, so that the other is free to go out. Most children get used to regular arrangements of this kind fairly easily if they are carried out in a casual way.

Shouldn't a child of five be expected to pick up his own toys? I'm so busy these days—with extra war work and all—it does seem that Junior should help me that much. But he doesn't seem to have any feeling of responsibility about it at all. I have to nag and punish over and over again. How can I train him to be more responsible?

Five-year-olds can do quite a lot of their own picking up, of course, and they should. But they always need reminding and they very often need help, especially at the end of the day when they're hungry, and tired and cross. Doing it together is a good plan at such times, a great deal easier on nerves and tempers than nagging and punishing—and less fatiguing for you in the end. Just because you are so busy these days, your boy may need this kind of help all the more. He wants to feel closer to you, perhaps, to keep you with him longer.

Don't be afraid that helping him will make him irresponsible. You can't make people responsible by force or rigid training. True responsibility is a matter of growing up, of feeling ready and able to stand by yourself. And that kind of feeling develops best in a friendly cooperative atmosphere where a child can try out his growing powers, but where he can be sure of help and support when he needs them.

Recently I have discovered that my daughter, aged ten, has been taking change from my purse and spending it on trinkets and candy. I had been suspicious for some time, but I hated to accuse her till I was sure. Yesterday a five-dollar bill vanished from my handbag. She is a child who has had lots of presents and attentions, and it is hard to understand why she should do this. Now I realize that she also has been telling little untruths for years. Where have we failed in our training? Perhaps she should have been punished when very young, at the very first sign of deceit. I am at a loss to know how to break her of this bad habit.

Untruthfulness and deceit are not just bad habits and are not merely a matter of faulty training. Punishment is unlikely to cure a child who is a chronic offender. Many little children (from two to four or five years old) may be dishonest because they haven't yet learned to distinguish between truth and fantasy or "mine and thine." At ten, however, the matter is likely to be more serious and the causes more deep-lying. There are a few simple measures, however, you might try.

See that the child has a regular allowance—perhaps twenty-five cents a week—to spend exactly as she sees fits on candy or anything she fancies, without interference from grown-ups. Make it quite clear that she is expected to stay within this amount. Be generous with extras in the form of treats or little gifts now and then, but be ready to say "no" on occasion, too. See that the child has plenty of opportunities for friendship and wholesome activities, and a sympathetic interest in these things from other members of the family. She needs time and attention from both her parents, appreciation for the things that concern her, and an abiding belief that however naughty or difficult she may be, her parents will stand by her and try to help her. You can try direct punishment for the fault if you like, but you are likely soon to be convinced that it does not help.

All these things are what might be called "the common-sense approach," and deserve a try. The chances are, however, that where a child of ten or thereabouts has been reared in a reasonable and careful home, yet continuously commits acts of dishonesty, the causes are more deep-lying, and the symptom will not yield without expert counsel or treatment. When such behavior has become, so to say, fixed, *i.e.*, a repetitive pattern that has extended over years, it is usually the result of deep-lying *unconscious* forces and impulses of which the child herself is wholly unaware.* When this is the case, "reasonable" treatment, on the one hand, or punishment and strong arm methods on the other are equally powerless to dislodge such a pattern. If in doubt as to how to proceed next you should certainly consult a psychiatrist as freely as you would a regular doctor if you were puzzled about a physical symptom.

My fourteen-year-old daughter wants to go to a farm work-camp this summer. She definitely does not want the kind of camp to which she has been going. I think it's fine that she's so patriotic, but I'm really afraid that she isn't old enough for the strain of farm work. What do you think?

It's true that some of our youngsters overestimate their own capacities, or perhaps do not fully visualize the demands which daily farm work will make upon them. At the same time I think *we*

* See "When Is a Person Neurotic?" by Lawrence S. Kubie, M.D., page 110, this issue.

sometimes *under*estimate our children's capacities. The way young children have risen to emergency needs throughout the world proves that.

Your daughter's real desire may be for more responsibility than you have allowed her to take, or for a greater stake in the war effort, or perhaps only for a change from the sameness of the usual summer camp routine. She may also be wanting (and not saying so) the co-educational feature of the work camp. I would suggest you try to find a camp for her, co-educational if possible, which offers a half-work and half-play program—the opportunity for three or four hours of farm or garden work as a regular job each day, and then rest and recreation. I believe that none of the well-supervised work camps will take a fourteen-year-old for a full day's farm work. Whatever camp you do send her to, be sure that those in charge fully understand the limitations of a young person's attention span and physical stamina so that they will adapt the work to these capacities.

While it is important to protect a girl of this age from overstrain, it is important also to help her toward work which will make her feel that she is taking an active part in what is going on in the world. Young people who are growing up feel the need for this kind of participation very strongly.

Suggestions for Study

Habit Training: Does It Build Character?

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

I. The Roots of Character

Sound character cannot be built by rigid habit training—nor by any system of rewards and punishments. It is essentially a matter of healthy emotional development. Readiness and relationship are the keynotes. The child's basic character is formed by the quality of his early experiences and relationships. He must love and trust those who guide him in order to accept the standards they impose; and he must feel that the adults can control him when he is unable to control himself. But he must be allowed to develop gradually. Forcing or rigidity may result in neurotic character formation.

II. Changing Ways with Babies

For a time regularity and routine were overstressed in infant care and parents were heavily warned against "spoiling." More recently we have come to realize how important it is for the baby to feel loved and protected, comfortable and secure. His basic attitude toward life and people—the very roots of sound character—are at stake. Crying is a distress signal which should not be ignored. His own natural rhythm and rate of development should be respected. Only when infantile needs have been fully met can they be readily outgrown to make way for more mature attitudes.

III. Guiding the Older Child

Good character is not just the sum of good habits learned once and for all. As the youngster develops his needs change and he takes on more responsibility for himself. The older child must have a chance to experiment and make mistakes—to learn from his own experience. He should be helped to plan and organize his own routines and be given some leeway to meet his responsibilities in his own way. As he approaches adolescence and struggles toward independence a certain amount of rebellion is inevitable, and while healthy guidance is still needed, it should aim more and more toward self-direction.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Four-year-old Betty is very selfish. She won't share any of her playthings with her three-year-old sister or with other children who come to visit. When her mother tries to make her do so, devastating storms ensue. Should she continue to insist? Should she punish Betty? What kind of early experiences might have made Betty so violently possessive about her property? How might she be helped today?

2. John is a happy-go-lucky ten-year-old. He comes to meals untidy and unwashed over and over again, and leaves his possessions scattered about everywhere. He's been sent from the table repeatedly; he's been punished and fined, but "he just can't seem to remember." How serious a problem do you consider this? How would you handle it?

3. Jane, who is now fourteen, has always been considered a well-behaved, conscientious child. She's given no trouble at home or at school. But this year things have not gone so well. Her school work has deteriorated markedly, and she seems moody and depressed at times. Recently she was caught cheating on an examination. Her parents are horrified. Can you suggest possible reasons for this "change of character"? What might be done?

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by C. Anderson Aldrich and Mary M. Aldrich — Macmillan

"The Parents' Manual".....1941
by Anna W. M. Wolf — Simon and Schuster
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"Infant Care".....1942
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by the Staff of the Child Study Association — Harper and Bros.

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by Caroline B. Zachry — D. Appleton-Century Co.

Science Contributes — When Is a Person Neurotic?

By LAWRENCE S. KUBIE, M.D.

Parents and teachers are often puzzled by the terms "neurotic," "abnormal," "emotionally ill," "seriously maladjusted," and others. The use of these terms implies a recognition of the fact that there are certain kinds of undesirable behavior in children or adults that do not yield to a kindly, common-sense approach, nor even to the wisest educational guidance. Children are said to "grow out of" certain undesirable traits, and it is true that they often do. It is equally true, however, that they do not always do so. What, then, do we mean by neurotic? How can we tell when an individual's development can safely be entrusted to the methods of education? When is psychotherapy indicated?

WE WILL not be aided in making a distinction between normal and neurotic based on the usual differential points. We are not concerned, for example, with the issue of whether a man knows the difference between right and wrong in the archaic and unrealistic legal sense, nor with the question of whether he believes that he knows what he is doing and why he is doing it—that is, whether he can rationalize his conduct. Nor are we concerned whether his conduct conforms to the social and cultural mores of any special time and place, or whether it is extravagant and fantastic, or orderly and sedate. These are important aspects of behavior, but not basic or constant in their implications. Thus, it is normal to wash one's hands, but not normal to have a handwashing compulsion, although there is nothing eccentric or anti-social or deviant from any culture in the mere act of handwashing. Similarly, to stand on your head in a tumbling act is normal, while to stand on your head in church is not—unless, perhaps, it is done to pay an election bet, or as a hazing stunt. Evidently the critical difference must be sought neither in the act nor in its setting, but in the determining mechanisms of the act. Behavior is normal or abnormal because of the nature of the inner forces which produce it.

What, then, are the characteristics of the inner determining forces which make any moment of thought, feeling, and action normal, and what are the characteristics which make it neurotic? The answer to this requires one further distinction—a distinction between forces which are within the range of our conscious perceptions, and those which are so deeply buried as to be inaccessible to any introspective knowledge of ourselves. It is as difficult for one who is unfamiliar with this field of phenomena to realize that unconscious yet psychologically powerful forces are constantly at work in everyone, as it was for the old scientist who had never looked through a microscope to believe in the microscopic objects which van Leeuwenhoek described. Nevertheless, it is one of the great achievements of modern science that the evidence for this has become incontrovertible. It is not possible to describe this evidence in detail, but it is important to note in passing that it is firmly based on a variety of different techniques applied to four fields of observation, to wit: experimental work with humans, clinical observations with psychoanalytic methods, clinical observation of animal behavior, and experimental work with the conditioned reflex. The weight of this varied evidence forces the psychiatrist to proceed from the premise that in every moment of human life the mosaic of thought, feeling, and conduct which constitutes behavior is determined by confluent forces, that we can be aware of only a fraction of these forces at any time, and that we tend naïvely to overestimate the relative power of those of which we are aware even in events in which it is the unrecognized forces which have played a determining role. To simplify our terminology, we can use a somewhat inaccurate foreshorten jargon and say that while we are conscious at any moment of some of the reasons for our conduct, we are always unconscious of others.

But how does this help us understand the distinction between the normal and abnormal in behavior? Here we are on clear grounds. *Whether it is "conscious" or "unconscious" forces which play a major part in producing any moment of behavior is the most important single distinction in human psychology.* This is because conscious motives are constantly molded by external realities, whereas unconscious forces pay no heed to the outside world. They are uninfluenced equally by the pain they may cause the individual himself and by the pain which they may inflict on others. They are deaf to exhortation, argument, and reason, or to appeals to love or hate. They

are literally insatiable. Consequently, the larger is their influence in any particular act, the more unrealistic do they make that act, and the more inflexible and the more endlessly repetitive it becomes. This is what has been called the "Repetitive Core of Neurosis," * and this is why neurotic behavior is endlessly and ceaselessly repetitive, whether it appears in the form of overt neurotic symptoms or of neurotic life patterns disguised as ordinary behavior. This is what the layman means when he says that we learn so little by experience. It would be more accurate to say that the consciously organized normal aspects of man can learn by experience, but not that part of him which is unconsciously driven, because the unconscious neurotic mechanisms go on their way unsated by gratification and unaltered by experience.

It is precisely this repetitiveness which constitutes the essential challenge to psychotherapy and its most difficult problem. However, the approach to this ultimate stronghold is always preceded by less complicated preparatory maneuvers.

These simpler psychotherapeutic expedients may be grouped under three main headings: (a) practical support—consisting primarily of advice, guidance, and assistance in the management of life situations and environmental difficulties, through social service aids, etc.; (b) emotional support—consisting essentially of sympathy, exhortation, admonition, encouragement, humor, art, recreation, companionship, etc.; (c) reorienting education—consisting primarily of efforts to alter the patient's habitual attitudes of guilt, fear, hate, and depression by educating him to tolerate his own conscious and unconscious needs and cravings, his instinctual hungers, his familial jealousies and hates, etc.

The third of these groups required extensive knowledge of unconscious psychological forces, and hides many subtle dangers. The first two, however, can hardly be called a discovery of the psychiatrist. They are the homely, non-specific, common-sense weapons of every wise parent and teacher. They must always be tried first. Indeed, where they succeed alone one may be sure that the maladjustment is more external than internal, since it is precisely their failure which reveals the rigid repetitiveness of behavior which is energized predominantly by unconscious internal forces, rather than by external environmental stresses. This, again, is why we say that psychotherapy as a science begins where the simple, rational methods fail.

Perhaps a banal example can make this clear. A child of three or four awakens at night, slips out of his bed, and comes pattering into the front room in search of his parents. On the first occasion he is picked up, hugged, and carried back to his room; and, after his wants are attended to, he is tucked in, kissed, and left there. A few minutes later, however, he reappears. The same "medicine" is applied, perhaps a little more brusquely, but none the less kindly. Even if it didn't work the first time, it might work now. But again the youngster appears. The parents try successively leaving the light on or the door open, a toy in his bed, cuddling, promises, bribes, scoldings, threats or punishments; but, in spite of their versatile efforts, the child appears over and over through the course of many evenings. This is a typical transient neurotic episode of childhood. The parents become distracted. They run through the whole gamut of human feelings, from affectionate patience to irritability, anger, and, finally, a panicky feeling that something is wrong. They feel that they have tried every possible sensible device, without success. They do not realize that their failure constitutes a thorough therapeutic test, demonstrating that the roots of the child's disturbed behavior lie deeply buried on a level which is inaccessible to any surface manipulations.

WHAT IS true of the small child is also true of the adult. Rewards and punishments, discipline and education, argument and reason, the sensible manipulation of the environment, occupational therapy, comfort, solace and exhortation—these are all essential preliminary steps in the approach to any psychotherapeutic problem. They clear away external complications. They effect cures when the situation is sick, rather than the individual. Thus, they are at once the ante-chamber to deeper treatment and a therapeutic test of its necessity. Where they work, it is folly to go deeper; but where they fail, it is even greater folly to persist with education, habit training, social service, work adjustment, etc., because, until he is already on the road to health, the neurotic patient cannot use such aids, no matter how badly he needs and craves them. In the case of the neurotic individual, unless treatment precedes practical assistance the wisest guidance will be sabotaged by the neurosis.

In child-raising, therefore, as in everything else, one proceeds from the simple to the complex. If the simple works, no more is needed; where it fails, instead of accusing oneself for the failure, as parents so often do, they should realize that they have per-

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* Kubie, L. S., The repetitive core of neurosis. Psychoanalyt. Quart. 1941, 10:23.

Looking at the Comics

A Survey by the Children's Book Committee of the Child Study Association

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MRS. HUGH GRANT STRAUS, Chairman

THE Children's Book Committee of the Child Study Association has watched with increasing interest and concern the growth of comic magazines as a form of children's reading. Approximately twenty million of these magazines are circulated monthly. They appear to have an almost universal appeal to children of all ages and both sexes, regardless of I.Q. or cultural background. The evident absorption with which millions of children follow the comics has challenged parents, teachers and librarians to acquaint themselves more fully with what lies between the covers of these magazines and to understand their appeal.

We have therefore undertaken to study and evaluate about a hundred current comic magazines. It became apparent at the outset that it would be impossible to list any "approved" or "recommended" titles in this field because of the changing nature of these publications from month to month and the wide range of material that may appear in any one issue. The Committee believes, therefore, that its best service is to analyze the nature of these publications and to offer suggestions by which parents and others may help children learn to discriminate among these as among other forms of reading.

To classify these magazines into types of subject matter is difficult because there is considerable overlapping. But in so far as they can be classified, they fall roughly into the following categories: Adventure, fantastic adventure, war, crime and detective, real stories and biography, jungle adventure, animal cartoons, fun and humor, love interest, and retold classics. The committee has attempted to analyze and evaluate each of these as follows:

Analysis of Content | *Comment and Evaluation*

ADVENTURE

Adventure permeates most of the comics, in one form or another. By far the greatest number may be said to be sheer adventure stories. These are swift-moving and packed with action. Most of them deal with contemporary life and its accompaniments—cars, planes, guns, bombs, money; workers, industrialists, gangsters, flyers and ordinary people. A very few have historical themes, with knights, pirates or cavemen as central figures. As a rule these stories depict the adventures of one consistent hero and his friends from month to month. A few have children playing a major rôle. Plots are usually far-fetched and improbable. As a rule the plot is complete in each issue, though a few, such as *Dick Tracy*, end on a high note "to be continued next month." In some stories, horror or torture scenes are introduced. Common to all the adventure stories are the elements of danger and suspense, a definite division of characters into "good" and "bad," a noble and fearless hero and a "menace." The good side always triumphs, the bad are punished or destroyed.

The appeal of these stories for children would seem to lie in their speed, in the violence of physical encounters, in a certain satisfying thoroughness of action (mopping up in the end!), in the simple and understandable relation between cause and effect, and in their use of the contemporary scene with its familiar properties. They satisfy children's yearning for action and adventure—however vicariously. Danger is indispensable to adventure, and normal children can take—can even enjoy vicariously—an amazing amount of it. We must differentiate, however, between the threat of danger and the portrayal of horror or torture. While it is true that some children enjoy horror pictures and stories, we believe that there is a limit to their capacity to absorb such material safely. Since we do not really know how much is too much, we believe that cruelty and torture scenes should be omitted from books for children's reading. Suspense most children seem to take in their stride, confident that all will end well—and it always does in the comics!

Analysis of Content | *Comment and Evaluation*

FANTASTIC ADVENTURE

A large number of stories are fantastic, centering about a superhuman hero such as *Superman* or one with magic powers, as *Mandrake the Magician.* A frequent pattern is the changeling personality, assuming special powers with a change of costume. Sometimes there are also pseudo-scientific devices, usually for grand-scale destruction. The villain is often a "mad scientist," and many of the stories are weird and grotesque. The setting is usually realistic and modern, no matter how fantastic the plot. Sometimes the setting is fantastic, too, as in projections into the future, such as *Buck Rogers,* or some other world or planet peopled with strange creatures and equipped with machines and devices controlling vast areas of action.

These stories seem to satisfy much the same emotional needs as do the traditional fairy tales: escape and wish-fulfillment. The fact that they combine fantasy with current, every-day life adds a satisfying element for our modern children. They undoubtedly serve many children as emotional release for feelings of aggression or frustration, and may have positive value in this respect. Some children, particularly those who are emotionally disturbed or insecure may need to be protected from a too-heavy reading diet of fantastic stories in this as well as other literature. Adults object to a certain sameness about these stories, which may or may not bother the children. They are often not really imaginative but merely variations on a stereotype theme.

CRIME AND DETECTIVE

Stories featuring crime, G-men, and police run through many of the magazines. As a rule the crimes are on a grandiose scale involving elaborate plotting such as bank robberies, hi-jacking, smuggling, gang wars, sabotage, and, currently, black market racketeering. The inevitable pattern is that the criminals are killed or brought to justice and the law emerges triumphant. "Crime does not pay" in the comics! Modern methods of crime detection are played up in some stories. A few are mystery stories but rarely of the deductive type, depending rather on speed and gunplay than on unravelling the mystery. Police and G-men are usually (but not always) represented as being on the job and competent.

Children are fascinated by tales of wrong-doing and evil. The avenging of wrongs and the punishment of evil-doers is a child's own fantasy pattern and such themes run through much of their literature as well as their play. The modern setting of these stories, however, has given rise to a fear that they may "give children ideas" of things to do. There is no competent evidence that reading about crime makes criminals. The motivation toward unsocial acts lies much deeper than any casual contact with ideas on a printed page. Nevertheless, lest children already on the verge of unsocial behavior may find here a blueprint for action, petty crimes such as pocket-picking, shoplifting, etc., should be omitted. From the point of view of sound ethics, children are best served if crime is made unattractive and unsuccessful. The child reader is likely to be less burdened when crimes remain entirely in the adult world —committed neither *by* children nor *against* children. Such crimes as the kidnapping of a child, for example, are definitely threatening to young readers.

REAL STORIES AND BIOGRAPHY

A number of magazines consist of stories from history or current world events or hero tales of the past and present. Stories of this kind sometimes appear in magazines of varied content, but more often they are presented in magazines devoted exclusively to this type, as in *True Comics.* These stories present both historic and current events in dramatic form, with emphasis on action and heroism, both individual and

As a technique for presenting educational material these strips have great potentialities. They provide not only information and education but also the inspiration of actual heroes with whom children can identify. Some children may prefer "true stories" to fiction or fantasy. Some like both. It need not be a question of "either-or." Adults have to guard against pressing the "educational" as the only good

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national. Heroes are men and women from many fields—science, social service, education, politics, and especially the current war.	reading for children—sheer entertainment is valid, too. These strips must maintain a balance of both or they fail. To offer them as the only sanctioned comics may, however, prejudice young readers against them.
WAR	
The war has taken an increasing part in the comics, seeping into many strips, such as *Terry and the Pirates,* which are not primarily war stories. But a considerable number of magazines are devoted entirely to war themes—air, sea or ground combat, spy stories, underground activities in occupied lands, or glimpses into army life here and abroad. Several of these seem to be intended for adult reading in army camps and elsewhere, but some will appeal to children. In stories which deal with spy and sabotage operations, all villains are Japanese or Germans (a noteworthy absence of Italians).	Stories about war and fighting cater to children's natural aggressive feelings and may, to some extent, serve as a release for them. Here children find a chance to participate vicariously in what is going on in the current adult world. Some of the strips in this category have further value in stimulating children's interest in planes and flying, in navy seamanship and in underground heroism in Europe. Whether or not such strips instill in our children hate for our enemy, and whether or not such hate is wise or necessary, are both moot questions about which there is at present no agreement among authorities. The issue is sometimes confused, however, by the injection of the "mad scientist" theme and fantastic characters in war stories. The realities of war are already fantastic enough. Attention might better be focused on the real crimes of Nazism and Fascism.
RETOLD CLASSICS	
A number of magazines feature classic stories, abridged into picture-comic presentation. Such tales as the *Three Musketeers, Moby Dick,* some of the classic fairy tales, and even Bible stories have appeared in this form. Naturally the more dramatic features of these stories have been chosen for this use, but in those examined the original stories had been adhered to faithfully.	The question is raised whether such abridgements "spoil" the original for reading in its longer and more difficult, but also more literary, form. We know that movies of certain classics have stimulated the reading of the books on which they were based. Perhaps these comics may also be used as an introduction to reading of the originals—particularly of the Bible. Adults should help children make this transition.
LOVE INTEREST	
Love enters into only a few of the comics. These picture an adventurous hero who is usually bent on "good deeds" of some sort, an unselfish heroine, and a scheming villain, male or female, or both. A few of these—and fortunately very few—exploit the female form and feature passionate embraces in an obvious bid for sex interest.	Romantic love is a perfectly permissible theme for readers of high school age (younger readers usually skip this kind). But there is a vast difference between romantic love and the sexual stimulation intended by suggestive pictures of amorous or scantily clad women. Such themes and pictures are certainly unsuitable for younger readers and definitely undesirable for adolescents. So also are pictures of chained women, of captive women being driven by men, and other sadistic themes.
JUNGLE ADVENTURE	
These are of two kinds—realistic adventures about hunting and the natural hazards of jungle life, and fantastic tales of encounters between jungle beasts	The matching of man's wits against the brute strength of the jungle is an ancient theme and holds a natural interest for children. The introduction of

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and men, as in *Jungle Comics*. Often it is really man against man, with one side using savage beasts against its adversaries. Sometimes women are featured in these stories, as captives or intended victims.	cruelty linked with sexual suggestion in some of the jungle story comics—as in struggles between rapacious monsters and beautiful half-clad maidens—is certainly not desirable for children's reading.
ANIMAL CARTOONS	
These are usually on the funny side, featuring many kinds of creatures—chiefly domestic animals—having adventures and behaving in human ways, getting in and out of all manner of scrapes. The prototypes, of course, are the Disney stories of *Mickey Mouse* and *Donald Duck*. The adventures are of the simple cause and effect type, as in *Funny Animals,* with the action less violent than in other adventure comics. Characters are knocked about but nobody gets killed!	The humorous adventures of child-like animals doing lively things are always appealing to young children, not only as humor, but also because they follow the child's own fantasy. In a way they represent the large family of many children. These cartooned creatures do all the things children would like to do, but dare not. Children continue to read them even after they begin to look for more exciting and more dramatic adventure stories elsewhere.
FUN AND HUMOR	
Many of the magazines—even the adventure books—include a page or two of jokes or humorous strips. A few are devoted entirely to humorous strips. The humor is mostly of the slapstick variety, with incongruous and ludicrous situations, silly names, comedy characters, and contortions of language contributing to the fun. The best of these are, of course, reprints of well-known syndicated strips such as *Mutt and Jeff, Blondie, Li'l Abner,* and others.	Human characteristics and frailties are the basis of these really "comic" cartoon strips which appeal to young and old. Children like especially the slapstick type of humor and the direct cause-and-effect action. These characters are deeply human and talk a language children readily understand. Humorous strips of this kind are all too few in the comic books, despite the fact that there is a real demand for them among young readers.

General Features

LANGUAGE—The language of the comic strips varies widely. In some there is an elaborate and self-conscious vocabulary, certainly beyond the reading ability of many young readers. In others there is a simple straightforward language. Gangster characters and "tough kids" speak the vernacular of the streets. The hero's use of English is usually above reproach, correct in grammar and diction. Foreign agents speak in the stereotyped German or Japanese accented English, while comic characters, like *Popeye,* use a nonsensical sort of gibberish. Ejaculations of pain, anger and surprise form a language all their own that defies description!

Children enjoy silly language. They also find a certain pleasure in words that are not "refined." Despite parental fears, such deviations are not likely to affect the language habits of children, which are likely to derive from deeply rooted home and school standards and not from casual contact with any entertainment medium. Even where children do ape certain expressions in the comics, this is a passing and legitimate form of enjoyment. It is probably also true that boys and girls old enough to read the words in the comics actually enlarge their vocabulary by this reading. Some of these children are not naturally great readers, and from the point of view of reading facility the comics are certainly better than no reading at all.

DRAWING—Drawing and color work in comic magazines show a wide range of quality, not only between different publications, but even within any one publication where several artists are represented. There is some excellent drawing and some fine cartooning as well as much very poor quality. An important factor is that these pictures are readily understood by children. They are the kinds of things children themselves try to draw, full of action and masses of color. Children can be helped to recognize which strips are good of their type and which are poorly drawn.

COLOR—The colors in many seem unnecessarily harsh and garish. In some the colors are bright and pleasantly contrasted, in others they are either clashing or monotonous. The colors in all of the magazines suffer from the poor quality of paper on which they are printed, and the mass reproduction results in the deterioration of the original art work. Some of the magazines show thought and care in art editing—others are obviously careless, as when colors are inconsistent in successive pictures. Children can be made aware and critical of this kind of carelessness in editing.

PAGE ARRANGEMENT—In some of the magazines the page layout is scattered and inharmonious, and the pictures not clearly delineated and sequenced. Those which have an orderly arrangement of pictures would seem to be easier for children to follow. "Orderly" need not mean "monotonous," however, as evidenced by those magazines which vary the sizes of the pictures and still maintain an orderly effect.

PRINT—Because the balloons and captions are hand-lettered, their readability varies greatly. Capitals are used throughout. In some the lettering is larger than ordinary book type and well spaced. The short lines, too, should make for easy reading. In many of the magazines, however, the lettering is irregular, the words are crowded and the lines too close together for clarity. Slant lettering also is less readable. The use of dark-colored backgrounds in the captions and insets greatly reduces the readability. Some of the magazines have learned to use white or light-colored backgrounds for all lettering.

This whole question of legibility is a serious one, for many of the magazines appear to be a strain on children's eyes. Publishers should be urged to remedy this fault and children should be urged to select their magazines with this factor in mind.

COVERS—The covers of some comic magazines are often more lurid than their contents—probably as an attention-getting device, to compete on the newsstands. As a rule the cover illustrates no actual incidents in the stories themselves. A very limited number of comic magazines feature on their covers a scantily dressed girl, usually in distress. This is a device obviously intended to lure older readers, and unfortunately cheapens the whole product.

ADVERTISEMENTS—Most of the comic magazines carry a small amount of advertising. The advertising of products which interest children—as candy, games, sporting equipment, and so on, is, of course, perfectly legitimate. Invitations to young readers to sell things in order to win the premiums illustrated must be more carefully scrutinized. Many of these seem to offer too much for too little. While legitimate earning opportunities for young people are desirable, such offers should be checked for their honesty and integrity. Parents can profitably discuss these things with their children.

Advertisements which claim to cure ailments such as asthma, or offer to develop strength and brawn by simple mechanical means, are, of course, misleading and sometimes harmful. Some of the advertisements are printed in small, almost unreadable type.

SPECIAL FEATURES — Children are natural "joiners"; they love to belong to a group. They also love to get mail. The various clubs and societies featured in comic magazines offer both of these satisfactions. The fact that they are a part of the publisher's promotion plan does not detract from this value to the children.

Puzzles, contests, book reviews, invitations to write in, and other special features in some of the magazines are especially valuable in stimulating young readers to activity and participation.

Pros and Cons of Comics Reading

To many adults, all comic books look alike. This Committee, however, finds that these magazines cannot be grouped as all of a kind, or as either "good" or "bad." As in other publications there is a wide variety among them, not only in their content and drawing but in their editorial standards. Some are carefully edited. Others are not. Some have amusing or interesting ideas, others not. Some have good drawing, good color work, good lettering, others not. It is important for us to recognize these differences and to help our children learn to discriminate among them. Here, as in their other reading, children can recognize differences between good writing and poor, between good drawing and bad—all within the limitations of the medium itself. We cannot expect to apply the same literary and art standards here which apply to other kinds of reading. That is not what children want of the comics.

Many parents, librarians and educators have found these magazines a thorn in the side. Their objections have been on several counts, some having to do with the magazines themselves and others with the degree of the children's absorption in them.

Their objections to these magazines are:

1. They lack literary quality.
2. They are esthetically unlovely.
3. They are poorly printed on cheap paper and hard on the eyes.
4. They are full of violence in picture and story.

Their objections to the children's absorption are:

1. They are too easy to read and they spoil the taste for better reading.
2. They are worthless educationally and culturally and therefore a waste of time.
3. They keep children from other activities and interests.
4. They seem to offer escape from real duties.

Many of these objections are valid. Yet some of the fears to which they have given rise seem not to be justified. Many children read good books along with comics. For others, comics reading is a stage through which they pass and from which they graduate with occasional backward glances! Some children, however, seem to find reading of ordinary books an uninviting task, and for such children the comics may well prove to be the only bridge to books, through the very ease and pleasure in reading them.

It is true that children do use the comics for escape —whether from the parents' or teachers' voice or just from the pressure of the many "musts" in their lives. But so have they always used books, and, in recent years, radio listening. These are a waste of time only if we believe that children's hours must all be spent in ways which will be educationally and culturally profitable. The fact is that we do not always know what manner of profit accrues to children from this "wasted" time.

Nor do we always know what they are getting from this comics reading that seems to them so rewarding. Unless we do know this, it is useless for us to press upon them the merits of "educational" reading, or even to attempt to select their comics reading for them. The satisfactions they are getting from the comics vary with individual children—some may enjoy them purely as escape, others may find a useful release for their own aggressive feelings in the slam-bang of the pictured action, still others may find it pleasant to identify with these fabulous characters and thus experience, if only vicariously, the joys of power and triumph. Of course, if a child is disturbed or in deep emotional conflict, he may be further burdened or disturbed by his comics reading. In such cases, psychologists point out that it is not the comics which *create* fear or distress, but rather the child's own neurotic fantasy which fastens upon the pictured people and creatures to objectify his fears. A child who lies awake nights because of frightening stories, whether in comics or classics, presents special problems which call for careful consideration not in relation to his reading alone but to more fundamental emotional needs.

The question of excessive comics reading is, like all other questions of degree, one which parents and teachers will have to decide in each case. While the *selection* of comics must be the child's own, the *amount* of such reading is properly the concern of the parent. The remedy lies not in forbidding or confiscating, not in bargaining or cajoling ("one comic for every good book you read"), but rather in broadening the child's real experiences and providing him with activities and interests that will compete with the comics for his time and attention. We can, too, capitalize on their comics reading by turning it from a passive into a creative interest. With pencil, with clay and paint, with puppets, children can be encouraged to dramatize their comics reading, giving expression to the emotions which center in its heroes and its furious action.

One must regret that comic magazines have, in some respects, missed their opportunities for giving children more than this. The comic magazine has a high potential value, not only because its form is so acceptable to children but because it can be timely and contemporary in a way that books cannot. Here, perhaps more effectively than elsewhere, we can find an opportunity to give children forward-looking attitudes, ideas and ideals about the world they live in. At present, most of these magazines reflect the status quo in social and political ideology. (The rich are successful because they have worked hard, the workingman is poor but proud.) While some of the strips have been used as vehicles for selling ideas—war bonds, salvage, etc.—only a few have shown awareness and a sense of responsibility with regard to social questions. It is a hopeful sign that we do find some adventure stories with such themes as race prejudice, social injustice and labor problems, good neighbor relations in stories of the Latin Americas, and an understanding and appreciation of underground movements in occupied Europe. However crude in presentation, such strips suggest a use for comics that may well be developed further. It is up to us to see that they are constructively used.

Most of the comics are, apparently, directed only

to boys and their interests. This seems to be a serious oversight, since girls are also heavy readers of comics. A few strips, like *Little Orphan Annie,* have girl heroines and attract girl readers especially, but only one whole book, "Calling All Girls," is addressed especially to the interests of girls; this is only partly devoted to comic strips consisting largely of excellent special features, short stories and rotogravure.

However unattractive the comic magazines may seem to us as literature and as art, we must, in evaluating them, be careful to appraise them also through the children's eyes, remembering that our adult appreciations and standards have resulted from a long process of trial and error of our own. Ruthlessly to attack what children value, to reflect upon their taste, is not to help their development. On the contrary, it may only shake their confidence in our ability to "understand." Prohibitions are likely to invite undercover reading, black market trading, and other evils. All taste is a process of development from the crude to the more subtle forms.

It goes without saying that the reading of comics, to the exclusion of everything else, would be an undesirable literary diet for children. While at one stage, and for a time, they may seem to forsake all else, it is important that children should be introduced to other books and other pictures—always in addition to and with respect for their own choices. We can offer them adventure, mystery, suspense and fantasy in books, too—books which need not be great literature but may serve as a transition to it.

It is important to note that the comics are something which boys and girls can buy for themselves, without benefit of adult supervision; and this very freedom of choice has values of its own. In fact these are almost the only reading that come within the boys' and girls' own purchasing power. If other books—not ominously labeled "classics"—could be made as accessible as ten-cent magazines, we might find children's choices would be wider, though they would undoubtedly continue to read the comics too.

To acquaint children with a wider range of both art and literature is the challenge and the task of parents, teachers, and librarians. It is good pedagogy to begin where the children are. We may well use the comics and their heroes as clues to their young readers' interests, as a basis for helping them progress to other books and other heroes which will serve these same interests.

Furthermore the children are showing us plainly enough the paucity of real and satisfying experiences in their lives. Not more and better reading only, but more and better living and doing and creating will give them some of the satisfactions for which they turn to the comics. Those children for whom home and school are busy, active places, whose work and play are alive and rich with real and meaningful activity, will take the comics in their stride. They will read the comics—yes—for these are today a part of the common reading *mores.* But this reading will take its proportionate place in their full lives, among many absorbing and enjoyable activities.

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Book Reviews

Love Against Hate. By Karl Menninger, M.D., with the collaboration of Jeanetta Lyle Menninger. 311 pp. Harcourt Brace and Co., New York, 1942. $3.50.

This stimulating and suggestive book is an excellent introduction to a theme which we hope will be developed more fully by the author because it will continue to be the concern of more and more men and women in search of the sources of their discontent. It seems to be fairly well recognized that the great changes in our times have affected the pattern of family life. These have been widely intellectualized, but Dr. Menninger finds that too little consideration has been given to the effect these changes have had upon the affections.

People, according to Dr. Menninger, are afraid of love; they are afraid even of loving themselves. The repressions and frustrations which end in misgivings and in our inability to give of ourselves freely are all related to our confusions of values, to our uncertainties about our place in life—whether as males and females, or as parents and children.

The masculine and feminine rôles are confused. Those who have worked in the field of family relationships have especially found this to be true. Men are deprived of the traditional masculine rôle that exploits their physical prowess, the rôle of protector and provider. In our industrialized society almost anybody can push the right buttons and bring in some of the needed cash. This was especially striking during the depression, when in many families it was the women and children who were able to "earn" while the men sat idle and lost almost the last hold they had on their distinctive economic functions. And in a century's search for human dignity, women, too, have succeeded in depriving themselves of a distinctive place in the community life.

Over-feminization through our school systems has long ago been criticized. Dr. Menninger points out afresh the effect of depriving boys of the opportunity to find out what is expected of the adult male as a member of the family. The pattern of private and personal relationships is obscured or confused. Cases describing the domination of the boy by the mother image make clear the sources of difficulty, when kind and devoted males, well trained from childhood, fail nevertheless to make good husbands. In childhood one needs no doubt to learn to be a good son; but one needs more than what the oversolicitous and overdemanding mother can supply. Parallel handicaps are, of course, acquired by our girls.

Our concern for getting the child to assimilate as quickly as possible all the values and virtues we hear about leads to an excessive intensification of early "training". This consists largely of a series of repressions before the child has a chance to experience the satisfaction of his impulses, and before he can find alternative outlets and choices. The results are frustrations and confusions and resentments that many never overcome. In reaction, therefore, many parents have found a passive acceptance of the child's undisciplined behavior as the "natural" way; but that is just as destructive.

Dr. Menninger considers the chief source of our frustration the lack of affection, especially the additional affection which is needed to compensate for the restrictions and repressions imposed on children by modern civilization. Unfortunately, parents commonly repeat toward their children the treatment which they themselves had experienced in childhood. Although this conduct includes an unconscious element of hostility, it is rationalized in terms of discipline, the maintaining of authority, and similar socially approved procedures.

Yet, as Dr. Menninger points out, the unwise conduct of parents is not all due to hostility or lack of affection. So much today can be traced to plain ignorance or to reliance upon "false prophets." Much of this opinionated "education" of parents is no doubt well intentioned; but the fragmentary distribution of scientific guesses and technical achievements lead only to confusion.

Many of the case histories in this book are naturally extreme, but they contain elements that are significant in the everyday life and adjustments of all of us. The emphasis on the need for better family patterns is encouraging and will help toward improving relationships in the home. The thousands of women, for example, who have been trying to carry on without their husbands because of the war will have to welcome back men who have been considerably altered during the separation; they will find it necessary to re-examine their attitudes and work out suitable solutions. Reading this book will stimulate such a reconsideration of practices and expectations. It will certainly help to clear up many common confusions.

SIDONIE MATSNER GRUENBERG

Books for Parents and Teachers

1942-1943 SUPPLEMENT

Selected by the Bibliography Committee of the Child Study Association of America

Alcohol Explored.....$2.75
by Howard W. Haggard and E. M. Jellinek.
Doubleday Doran and Co. 1942. **297 pp.**
Presents the known facts and a new scientific attitude toward the problem of alcoholism, which the authors regard as a disease.

All Children Listen.....$1.50
by Dorothy Gordon George H. Stewart, 1942. **128 pp.**
Brief survey of the history of children's radio in this country and Europe.

American Destiny: A Faith for America.....$1.50
by A. Powell Davies Beacon Press, 1942. **120 pp.**
A stimulating interpretation of America's rôle in the world conflict.

And Keep Your Powder Dry: An Anthropologist Looks at America.....$2.50
by Margaret Mead
William Morrow and Co., 1942. **274 pp.**
An interesting analysis of our American character as a factor in winning the war and planning the post-war world.

At Home with Children: The Guide to Preschool Play and Training.....$2.50
by Charlotte Gans Garrison and Emma Dickson Sheehy
Henry Holt and Co., Inc., 1943. **256 pp.**
A sensible, friendly little book full of practical suggestions for keeping young children busy and happy indoors and out.

Books and Library Reading for Pupils of the Intermediate Grades.....$1.50
by Evangeline Colburn
University of Chicago Press, 1942. **167 pp.**
Suggestions for the use of library books in developing children's classroom interests and a selected listing of titles excellently annotated and arranged to this end. Especially valuable is the group of titles suggested for non-readers and remedial use.

Child Life in School: A Study of the Seven-Year-Old Group.....$3.75
by Barbara Biber, Lois B. Murphy, Louise P. Woodcock and Irma S. Black E. P. Dutton and Co., 1942. **658 pp.**
The nature and behavior of seven-year-olds explored in a careful research study and reported in fascinating detail.

Children Above 180 I.Q......$3.00
by Leta S. Hollingworth
World Book Co., 1942. **352 pp.**
Gives insight into the special problems of highly intelligent children and the real challenge which they present.

Children's Centers: A Guide for Those Who Care For and About Young Children.....$1.50
edited by Rose H. Alschuler, issued by National Commission for Young Children
William Morrow and Co., 1942. **168 pp.**
Discusses with warmth and understanding the problems and procedures for establishing and conducting centers for young children. Includes directions for making equipment.

Discovering Ourselves: A View of the Human Mind and How It Works.....$3.00
by Edward A. Strecker, M.D., and Kenneth E. Appel, M.D. The Macmillan Co., Rev. Edition, 1943. **434 pp.**
A readable presentation of human psychology from the dynamic point of view.

Does Your Child Obey?.....$1.25
by Regina Westcott Wieman
Harper and Bros., 1943. **128 pp.**
A discussion of obedience as one aspect in the child's total development. Basically sound, but couched, unfortunately, in rather obstruse language.

Education Between Two Worlds.....$3.00
by Alexander Meiklejohn
Harper and Bros., 1942. **308 pp.**
Compares the philosophies of five important educators and develops a basic philosophy for education after the war.

Education for Democratic Survival.....$1.50
by Walter E. Myer and Clay Coss
Civic Education Service, 1942. **264 pp.**
A plea for greater educational emphasis on problems of war and reconstruction, with a suggested program and lists of source material for high schools and colleges.

Education of the Young Child: A Nursery School Manual.....$2.50
by Catherine Landreth
John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1942. **279 pp.**
Covers problems of plant and equipment and discusses effective techniques for the guidance of young children. For parents, too.

Evaluation of Modern Education, An.....$2.50
edited by J. Paul Leonard and A. C. Eurich, et al., for the Society of Curriculum Study
D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1942. **299 pp.**
Reviews the facts and lends encouragement to modern educational practice.

Facts for Childless Couples.....$2.00
by E. C. Hamblen, M.D.
Charles C. Thomas, 1942. **103 pp.**
Detailed information on current medical procedures for testing supposed sterility and relieving it when possible.

Family and Democratic Society, The.....$4.00
by Joseph Kirk Folsom
John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1943. **755 pp.**
A scholarly study—difficult but rewarding. Widely revised since its original appearance under the title of "The Family: Its Sociology and Social Psychiatry."

Family in a World at War, The.....$2.50
edited by Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg
Harper and Bros., 1942. **298 pp.**
Twenty experts discuss timely subjects, clarifying the position of the family in the present emergency and stressing the concept that "family morale is the basis of all morale."

Good Nutrition for Everybody.....$1.50
by L. Jean Bogart
University of Chicago Press, 1942. **165 pp.**
Clear, brief, and practical presentation of the essential facts on nutrition.

Healthy Babies Are Happy Babies.....$1.50
by Josephine Hemenway Kenyon, M.D.
Little, Brown and Co., third rev. edition, 1943. **343 pp.**
A practical handbook on the physical and mental care of the infant and young child. Includes chapters on the expectant mother and on the new-born infant.

Help Your Doctor to Help You. Heart Disease...47 pp.
Help Your Doctor to Help You. Constipation....59 pp.
Harper and Bros., 1942. $.95 each
Two of a series of brief booklets sponsored by a committee of eminent physicians recognizing to some extent psychological, as well as physiological factors in disease.

How to Teach Nutrition to Children.....$2.00
by Mary Pfaffmann and Frances Stern
M. Barrows and Co., 1942. 224 pp.
Demonstrates to teachers, health workers and parents how nutrition can be taught in ways that delight children.

Infant and Child in the Culture of Today: The Guidance of Development in Home and Nursery School.....$4.00
by Arnold Gesell, M.D., and Frances L. Ilg, M.D.
Harper and Bros., 1943. 399 pp.
Detailed scientific account of the development of children from infancy to five years. Valuable contribution for parents as well as nursery school personnel.

In Quest of Foster Parents: A Point of View on Home-finding.....$1.75
by Dorothy Hutchinson
Columbia University Press, 1943. 145 pp.
A thoughtful analysis of the problems of foster home care in normal times and under war conditions.

Intercultural Education in American Schools: Proposed Objectives and Methods.....$2.00
by William E. Vickery and Stewart G. Cole
Harper and Bros., 1943. 214 pp.
An effort to help our schools to deal constructively with the problem of intercultural and inter-racial conflict.

Keep Them Human: The Young Child at Home....$1.50
by C. Madeleine Dixon John Day Co., Inc. 156 pp.
Helpful practical suggestions for skillful handling of young children. Of value to parents and those who are planning to work in child care centers.

Love Against Hate.....$3.50
by Karl Menninger, M.D.
Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc., 1942. 311 pp.
A psychiatrist's analysis of love and hate, emphasizing ways in which the positive forces of love can be directed from infancy on.

Marriage Before and After.....$2.00
by Paul Popenoe Wilfred Funk, Inc., 1943. 264 pp.
The director of the American Institute of Family Relations discusses love and marriage, emphasizing growth and development in married life.

Marriage for Moderns.....$3.00
by Henry A. Bowman
McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1942. 493 pp.
One of the better text-books on the college level, presenting facts and principles and discussing the attitudes and problems that are likely to play a part in marriage.

Meaning of Intelligence, The.....$4.00
by George D. Stoddard
The Macmillan Co., 1943. 504 pp.
Weighs and correlates current research findings on questions of intelligence, discussing their educational and social implications.

Mind, Medicine, and Man.....$3.50
by Gregory Zilboorg, M.D.
Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc., 1943. 344 pp.
The emotional nature of man presented from the psychoanalytic point of view. A very readable and interesting book.

Our Age of Unreason: A Study of the Irrational Forces in Social Life.....$3.00
by Franz Alexander, M.D.
J. B. Lippincott Co., 1942. 371 pp.
A psychoanalyst examines the American personality and finds insecurity our main threat, suggesting how it arose and how it can be overcome.

Our Children Face War.....$2.00
by Anna W. M. Wolf
Houghton Mifflin Co., 1942. 214 pp.
A wise guide for parents who are concerned with their children's wholesome development in time of stress as well as their own rôles in the home and community.

Psychology and Human Living.....$1.50
by Walter C. Langer for the Commission on Human Relations D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1943. 286 pp.
A dynamic explanation of behavior addressed to older adolescents and their parents. Aims at an understanding of motivation and a tolerance toward the behavior of others.

Psychology Through Literature.....$3.50
edited by Caroline Shrodes, Justine Van Gundy, and Richard Husband
Oxford University Press, 1943. 400 pp.
Psychology presented through well-chosen selections from biography and fiction with brief, illuminating introductions.

Psychotherapy in Medical Practice.....$3.50
by Maurice Levine, M.D.
The Macmillan Co., 1942. 320 pp.
Explains the place of psychotherapy in medical practice and something of its technique. Intended for the general practitioner, but of interest to all who work with counselling problems.

Psychotherapy with Children.....$3.50
by Frederick H. Allen, M.D.
W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1942. 311 pp.
The head of the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic describes in some detail his particular technique with children.

Quicksand: The Way of Life in the Slums.....$.96
by Mary M. Simkhovitch
Row, Peterson and Co., 1942. 64 pp.
Slum clearance and adequate housing discussed with realistic understanding of the practical difficulties involved.

Run of the House, The.....$2.25
by Charlotte Adams The Macmillan Co., 1942. 217 pp.
Advice on household management which stresses the well-being and happiness of those who have the run of that house.

Rural America Today: Its Schools and Community Life.....$3.75
by George A. Works and Simon O. Lesser
University of Chicago Press, 1942. 450 pp.
A study by the General Education Board picturing the rural school of today and presenting constructive suggestions for its improvement.

Sex Guidance in Family Life Education: A Handbook for the Schools.....$2.25
by Frances Bruce Strain
The Macmillan Co., 1942. 340 pp.
An outstanding contribution in the field of sex education, addressed directly to the school, and stressing the responsibility of the home, the school and the community.

Slaves Need No Leaders: An Answer to the Fascist Challenge to Education.....$2.75
by Walter M. Kotschnig
Oxford University Press, 1943. 284 pp.
A plea for international cooperation after the war to reform education and provide a real equality of opportunity in this field.

Teaching Physical Education in the Elementary School $2.00
by E. Benton Salt, Grace I. Fox, Elsie M. Douthert, B. K. Stevens A. S. Barnes and Co., 1942. 340 pp.
Suggestions for formulating and conducting a sound but flexible program based upon the needs and interests of the group.

Unfinished Task, The: Economic Reconstruction for Democracy $3.00
by Lewis Corey Viking Press, Inc., 1942. 314 pp.
An easily read book which throws light on the economic causes of our present world problems.

What Do We Eat Now? A Guide to Wartime Housekeeping $2.50
by Helen Robertson, Sarah MacLeod and Frances Preston
J. B. Lippincott Co., 1942. 349 pp.
Pertinent recipes and much sound advice for household management under wartime conditions.

Your Child's Religion $1.75
by Mildred M. Eakin and Frank Eakin
The Macmillan Co., 1942. 182 pp.
Helpful suggestions for religious parents puzzled by their children's questions about God and other religious concepts.

Your First Baby $1.00
by Louise Cripps Glemser
A. S. Barnes and Co., 1943. 90 pp.
A simple "beginners" book for young mothers, with sound practical suggestions for the care of a young baby. Good chiefly as an introduction to more detailed literature on the subject.

You, Your Children, and War $2.00
by Dorothy W. Baruch
D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1942. 234 pp.
A sympathetic discussion of the problems that confront parents and children in war time, with a careful analysis of fears, hostility and aggression.

FICTION

The books listed below are recommended because of their special insight into some phase of family relationship or the emotional life of children. (The list makes no pretense of covering the fiction of the year.)

In Time of Peace $2.75
by Ben Ames Williams
Houghton Mifflin Co., 1942. 750 pp.

Little Locksmith, The $2.50
by Katharine Butler Hathaway
Coward-McCann, Inc., 1943. 256 pp.

Mama's Bank Account $2.00
by Kathryn Forbes
Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc., 1943. 204 pp.

Sophie Halenczik, American $2.00
by Rose Caroline Feld
Little, Brown and Co., 1943. 176 pp.

Yesterday's Children $2.00
by LaMar Warrick
Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1943. 202 pp.

BEYOND THE TYRANNY OF THE CLOCK

(*Continued from page 104*)

the rights of an individual. Slowly, and little by little, the baby will feel the impact of the society in which he lives and come to realize that the world contains other individuals besides himself, each one of whom has his right to consideration. But this realization, too, is a part of maturing; and the baby who has always been at peace, who is happy and secure, who is ever ready to reach forward to take the next step in his maturing process is more likely to accept easily the normal restrictions involved in living in society than the baby who has already developed considerable feelings of frustration, who hangs back because he fears giving up an old way for a new one.

This approach to child care is a far cry from the old concept of Jonathan Edwards that children were conceived in sin and could only enter the Kingdom of Heaven after a rigorous training designed to purify them and "break their will." It is also a long way from the concept of the Behaviorists who believed that babies were like blank slates upon which almost anything could be written by a early conditioning.

The newer approach considers babies as individuals, each endowed with his own special combination of potentialities, but all with a fundamental drive to grow and mature according to the pattern characteristic of the human being. What we need to do for our babies is to give them good food, suitable clothing, shelter, protection from disease, as adequate as modern science can provide; and we need also to love them, and not be afraid to show it. We need to make them happy and peaceful, as much of the time as possible. As they grow, we want ever to be on the alert to help with the next step forward in development, but never to push them ahead of their time, nor hinder them once they have arrived at a goal.

This attitude toward baby care has one great advantage for the mother—it gives her the opportunity of having so much more fun with her baby than any of the régimes that have had a vogue in the past.

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Children's Books

The Out-of-Doors in New Books

Very First Garden. By Dorothea Gould and Elizabeth Ripley. Oxford Univ. Press. 48 pp. $.50.

For the very young gardener, here are the essential facts about where, when and how to garden, not forgetting the fun it may be, as well as the work. The tiny volume is easy to read, with line drawings that are both entertaining and instructive. (7 to 10.)

Up Above and Down Below. By Irma E. Webber. William R. Scott, Inc. Unpaged. $1.25.

An important and timely book, since even the youngest child today is aware of the importance of food production through the Victory garden. The material obviously has been "laboratory tested," yet the author-illustrator has simplified her pictures and text to emphasize her points without sacrificing any pertinent facts. The child who has known this slender volume will always remember the growth habits of different varieties of plant life. (4 to 7.)

Everyday Birds. By Gertrude E. Allen. Houghton Mifflin Co. Unpaged. $.85.

A young child has a real interest in birds but does not want a great many non-essentials about his little feathered friends. The author has wisely selected those birds most likely to fly into a child's horizon and in a pleasant chatty manner discourses on their ways. There is even a bit of humor in her discussion of Mr. Wren's house-hunting. Since the book is intended for bird identification it is too bad that it has only black and white illustrations. (4 to 7.)

Insects and Their Ways. Bertha Morris Parker. Illustrated by Elizabeth Newhall. Harper and Bros. 36 pp. $1.00.

Little children rarely sit still for long, but they will watch entranced for long periods at a time the comings and goings of ants, bees, butterflies and other insects. In an extremely successful manner, this naturalist, who has worked with children, describes the various groups of insects, their characteristics and their metamorphoses. The illustrations are scientifically accurate and outstanding for such an inexpensive book. (7 to 10.)

Warm Earth. By Dorothy Waugh. Oxford University Press. 43 pp. $1.00.

With sound scientific background, and a deep and abiding passion, this book tells the story of soil and how all living things take their being from it. The author's beautiful prose sets a tempo like that of Nature in her continuously changing processes. It is a surprisingly compact book, with single page blocks of text and intriguing illustrations.

Out of Doors in Spring. Out of Doors in Summer. Out of Doors in Autumn. Out of Doors in Winter. By C. J. Hylander. Macmillan Company. Each $1.50.

This new series of nature handbooks fills a definite need. There are, of course, field books on special subjects, but this series makes for each season a comprehensive survey of plant and animal life, with emphasis on the changes characteristic of that season. The style is scientific but simple, for a juvenile audience. The black and white pen and ink drawings are so clear that this lack of color is not a drawback to the general merit of the series. The volume on winter is an especially valuable contribution on an all-too-neglected subject. (10 and over.)

Earth's Adventures: The Story of Geology for Young People. Carroll Lane Fenton. The John Day Co. 207 pp. $3.00.

It is the rare person who can escape picking up some information about birds or insects or plant life, but even those with a good background in other fields of nature confess to only a bowing acquaintance with the earth's story. The subtitle might therefore well be changed to "The Story of Geology for *All* People." It is carefully planned, just as carefully executed, well written, and constantly interesting. The combination of photographs and drawings as illustrations is a happy one; they are numerous and instructive. (12 and over.)

Aluminum: A Magic Mineral. By Lilian Holmes Strack. Harper and Bros. 53 pp. $1.00.

Facts which are little known about the romantic past of aluminum and the modern method of its production combine to make a lively and informative book—one of a series of similar volumes on metals. Photographic illustrations. (9 to 12.)

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Radio Programs

WITH the family car unavailable as a source of family fun this summer, parents and children will have to find their recreation at home, and one great source of shared enjoyment can be the family radio. While each family member will still want to listen to his own particular favorites at certain hours, there are many programs which have a wide enough appeal for the whole family.

Comedy programs, for example, have no age limits, and children will enjoy laughing with their parents at whichever happens to be their favorite comedian—provided the program is at an hour when the children are still about.

Outstanding, of course, for family listening is *The Aldrich Family*. Young and old will enjoy, though from different points of view, the innocent scrapes into which Henry lands himself, his family and his friends. *That Brewster Boy* is another such program.

For families who are quiz-minded *Information Please* (though somewhat late in the East), the *Quiz Kids,* and a number of others provide not only good mental exercise but a sort of game for all the family to play—trying to beat the experts to the answer. Less dignified, but providing informational entertainment with an added fillip are such programs as *Double or Nothing, Take It or Leave It* and *True or False,* and many children find hilarious fun in radio's game of *Truth or Consequences.*

Mystery and detective programs have their enthusiasts among parents as well as young people. *Ellery Queen, I Love a Mystery,* and *Mr. and Mrs. North* are popular among listeners who love to unravel a mystery along with their drama. This is another indoor sport at which twelve- to fourteen-year-olds can play with their parents.

Educational drama may also have a share in family listening. *Cavalcade of America* makes a rare combination of drama and history, with emphasis also on today's history in the making. Music, too, is available to suit almost every taste from the current tempo of *Your Hit Parade* to *Gilbert and Sullivan* recordings. The *Lux Radio Theatre* attracts older children who enjoy its really fine dramatic quality.

Not everyone likes good music or good drama. Not everyone likes educational information. But every family can find something to get together on and can profit by this sharing. J. F.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY ADOLESCENCE

(*Continued from page 107*)

children can be told is the fact that there are places and times appropriate for everything—even bad language. Even in the best of families, in the intimate family circle, a child may burst forth with some inappropriate words which under other circumstances, in public or in the classroom, he would not use. Again, it is not a problem of stopping him by good habit training from saying "damn," but rather a problem of when and where he may use it. It is this discriminatory capacity of the *ego* which we are trying to build up.

Character and personality are influenced by all the enormous variety of experiences which happen to a child—not just by habit training. Children in the age which we have discussed will confront each parent with surprising situations which are baffling and often unintelligible. There is no one pattern for dealing with such situations. On the relationship the adult has with the child will depend the success of working out an agreement acceptable to everybody concerned. Whatever we do, we must not lose sight of the importance of those experiences which strengthen the *ego* of the child, for it is the strength of this which determines how maturely a person can function in a democratic society.

SCIENCE CONTRIBUTES

(*Continued from page 111*)

formed a diagnostic test. The failure of their simple methods has proved that the problem they have been dealing with is inaccessible to the "common-sense" approach because it is "neurotic" in the true sense of the word, *i.e.,* it is rigid behavior, determined by deep unconscious processes and demanding technical psychiatric help.

[This is an excerpt (edited slightly) from a speech read October 22, 1942, at the fifteenth Graduate Fortnight of the New York Academy of Medicine. Reprinted from the Academy Bulletin, March, 1943, second series, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 184-187.]

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WAR SAVINGS BONDS

In the Magazines

When Children Misbehave. By LaBerta A. Hattwick. Parents' Magazine, June, 1943.

When our children misbehave, our hurt pride often makes us worry so much about what other people will think that it's hard for us to look at the situation unemotionally. If parents could get more perspective on their problems, they would not need to feel so baffled. One way is for parents to take a vacation away from the children. This need not be an "escape" from home, but rather a way of gaining a fresh outlook on home problems.

Delinquent Children—Whose Responsibility? By Martha W. MacDonald, M.D. National Parent-Teacher, May, 1943.

The delinquent child is not so much a "bad" child as a sick one. Delinquency is a disease, and war spreads it like an epidemic. If we value tomorrow's citizens we should not neglect them now in their great need in these disturbed days. All of us need to be informed as to just what recreational opportunities the community makes available to youth and what special service is offered a child whose conduct has already labeled him as delinquent.

The Rorschach Test in Family Case Work. By Fritz Schmidl. The Family, May, 1943.

A description of the uses of the interesting Rorschach personality test which seems to be yielding amazing results in the evaluation of the structure of personality. This test is particularly reliable because, unlike most personality ratings, it leaves no room for any subjective view on the part of the testing person, if he follows the rules of administration correctly.

Clinical experience and statistical experiments have shown that the Rorschach test, if properly used and interpreted, gives a telling picture of a person's basic personality and even enables a psychiatrically trained interpreter to make a psychiatric diagnosis. The Rorschach test has proved of even greater value for use with children than with adults.

Eating in Groups in Wartime. By Lili Peller. Mental Hygiene, April, 1943.

A discussion of the problems of feeding the growing number of children who are now under institutional or semi-institutional care, with special emphasis on the emotional needs of these children for reassurance and affection.

News and Notes

O.W.I. Pamphlets

The Division of Educational Services of the Office of War Information in Washington announces that it has for distribution a list of publications carrying war information of special interest to an educational audience. A number of them are available without cost or for a small fee.

The list of some of these recent government publications include:

O.P.A. Bulletin for Schools and Colleges, No. 2, March, 1943. Write to Chief, Educational Services Branch, O.P.A., Washington, D. C.

Proposals for a Free World: Toward New Horizons, No. 2. Division of Public Inquiries, Office of War Information, Washington.

Schools at War, Second issue. Education Section, War Savings Staff, Treasury Dept., Washington.

Understanding the War. Prepared by the Federal Education War Council. Order from Division of Public Inquiries, O.W.I., Washington.

After the War—Toward Security: Freedom from Want. National Resources Planning Board. Supt. of Documents, Washington. Price, 10 cents.

Guidance Manual for the High School Victory Corps. Supt. of Documents, Washington. Price, 20c.

Handbook on Education and the War. Supt. of Documents, Washington. Price, 55 cents. Results of the National Institute on Education and the War.

Education by Radio

At the Ohio State University's 14th Institute for Education by Radio, there were two sessions dealing with children's radio programs. Miss Gloria Chandler of the Children's Theatre in the radio department of the Association of Junior Leagues of America was chairman. The discussion this year concerned itself largely with programs that originate on local stations.

Two outstanding programs of news analysis for children, one in Cincinnati and one in Columbus, received a great deal of attention. There was also a session devoted to a children's program ideas exchange under the chairmanship of Harriet Hester, formerly Education Director of Station WLS, Chicago. The children who participated ranged from six to eighteen and were very frank in the discussion of their preferences. It was rather startling to hear how many of the younger children were addicts of the more "scarey" programs.

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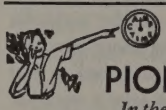

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